

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



A DEATH UNEXPECTED BY THE READER.

A LIFE'S SECRET.

CHAPTER XIX.—A JOURNEY IN DR. BEVARY'S CARRIAGE.

THESE violent interruptions to the social routine, to the organized relations between masters and men, cannot take place without leaving their effects behind them: not only in the bare cupboards, the confusion, the bitter feelings while the contest is in actual progress, but in the results when the dispute is brought to an end and things have resumed their natural order. You have seen some of its disastrous working upon the men: you cannot see it all, for it would take a whole volume to depicture it.

But there was another upon whom it was promising to work badly; and that was Mr. Hunter. At this, the eleventh hour, when the dispute was dying out, Mr. Hunter knew that he was unable to weather the short remains of the storm.

Drained, as he had been at various periods, of sums paid to Gwynn of Ketterford, he had not the means necessary to support the long-continued struggle. Capital he possessed still; and, had there been no disturbance, no strike, no lock-out—had things, in short, gone on upon their usual course uninterruptedly, his capital would have been sufficient: not as it was. His money was

locked up in arrested works, in buildings brought to a standstill. He could not fulfil his contracts or meet his debts; materials were lying idle; and the crisis, so long expected by him, had come.

It had not been expected by Austin Clay. Though aware of the shortness of capital, he believed that with care difficulties would be surmounted. The fact was, Mr. Hunter had succeeded in keeping the worst from him. It fell now upon Austin like a thunderbolt.

Mr. Hunter had come early to the works. In this hour of embarrassment—all as he might be, as he was—he could not be absent from his place of business. When Austin went into his private room he found him alone, poring over books and accounts, his head leaning on his hand. One glance at Austin's face told Mr. Hunter that the whispers as to the state of affairs, which were now becoming public scandal, had reached his ears.

"Yes, it is quite true," said Mr. Hunter, before a word had been spoken by Austin. "I cannot stave it off."

"But it will be ruin, sir!" exclaimed Austin.

"Of course it will be ruin. I know that, better than you can tell me."

"Oh, sir," continued Austin, in agitation, "it must not be allowed to come. Your credit must be kept up at any sacrifice."

"Can you tell me of any sacrifice that will keep it up?" returned Mr. Hunter.

Austin paused in embarrassment. "If the present difficulty can be got over, the future will soon redeem itself," he observed. "You have sufficient capital in the aggregate, though it is at present locked up."

"There it is," said Mr. Hunter. "Were the capital not locked up, but in my hands, I should be a free man. Who is to unlock it?"

"The men are returning to their shops," urged Austin. "In a few days, at the most, all will have resumed work. We should get our contracts completed, and things would work round. It would be needless ruin, sir, to stop now."

"Am I stopping of my own accord? Shall I put myself into the gazette, do you suppose? You talk like a child, Clay."

"Not altogether, sir. What I say is, that you are worth more than sufficient to meet your debts; that, if the momentary pressure can be lifted, you will surmount embarrassment and regain ease."

"Half the bankruptcies we hear of are caused by locked-up capital—not by positive absence of it," observed Mr. Hunter. "Were my funds available, there would be reason in what you say, and I should probably go on again to ease. Indeed, I know I should; for a certain heavy—heavy—" Mr. Hunter spoke with perplexed hesitation—"A heavy private obligation, which I have been paying off at periods, is at an end now."

Austin made no reply. He knew that Mr. Hunter alluded to Gwinn of Ketterford: and perhaps Mr. Hunter suspected that he knew it.

"Yes, sir; you would go on to ease—to fortune again; there is no doubt of it. Mr. Hunter," he continued with emotion, "it must be accomplished somehow. To let things come to an end for the sake of a thousand or two, is—is—"

"Stop!" said Mr. Hunter. "I see what you are driving at. You think that I might borrow this 'thousand or two' from my brother, or from Dr. Bevary."

"No," fearlessly replied Austin, "I was not thinking of either one or the other. Mr. Henry Hunter has enough to do for himself just now—his contracts for the season were more extensive than ours: and Dr. Bevary is not a business man."

"Henry has enough to do," said Mr. Hunter. "And if a hundred pound note would save me, I should not ask Dr. Bevary for its loan. I tell you, Clay, there is no help for it: ruin must come. I have thought it over and over, and can see no loophole of escape. It does not much matter: I can hide my head in obscurity for the short time I shall probably live. Mine has been an untoward fate."

"It matters for your daughter, sir," rejoined Austin, his face flushing.

"I cannot help myself, even for her sake," was the answer, and it was spoken in a tone that told of a breaking heart.

"If you would allow me to suggest a plan, sir—"

"No, I will not allow any further discussion upon the topic," peremptorily interrupted Mr. Hunter. "The blow must come; and, to talk of it will neither soothe nor avert it. Now to business. Is it to-day or to-morrow that Grafton's bill falls due?"

"To-day," replied Austin.

"And its precise amount?—I forget it."

"Five hundred and twenty odd pounds."

"Five hundred and twenty! I knew it was somewhere about that. It is that bill that will floor us—at least, be the first step to it. How closely has the account been drawn at the bank?"

"You have the book there, sir. I think there is little more than thirty pounds lying in it."

"Just so. Thirty pounds to meet a bill of five hundred and twenty. No other available funds to pay in. And you would talk of staving off the difficulty!"

"I think the bank would pay it, were all circumstances laid before them. They have accommodated us before."

"The bank will not, Austin. I have had a private note from them this morning. These flying rumours have reached their ears, and they will not let me overdraw even by a pound."

There was a commotion, as of sudden talking, outside at that moment, and Mr. Hunter turned pale. He supposed it might be a creditor. "I would pay them all if I could," he exclaimed, in a tone of wailing; "I would pay every one."

"Sir," said Austin, "leave me here to-day to meet these matters. You are too ill to stay."

"If I do not meet them to-day, I must to-morrow. Sooner or later, it is I who must answer."

"But indeed you are ill, sir. You look worse than you have looked at all."

"Can you wonder that I look worse? The striking of the docket against me will be the breaking of my heart."

The talking outside now subsided into laughter, in which the tones of a female were distinguishable, and Mr. Hunter thought he recognised them. In fact they were those of one of his women servants, who, unconscious of the proximity of her master, had been laughing and joking with some of the men, whom she had encountered upon entering the yard.

"What can Susan want?" exclaimed Mr. Hunter, signing to Austin to open the door.

"Is that you, Susan?" Austin exclaimed, as he obeyed.

"Oh, if you please, sir, can I speak a word to my master?"

"Come in," called out Mr. Hunter. "What do you want?"

"Miss Florence has sent me, sir, to give you this, and to ask you if you'd please to come round."

She handed in a note. Mr. Hunter broke the seal

and ran his eyes over it. It was from Florence, and contained but a line or two. She informed her father that the person who had been so troublesome at the house once or twice before, in years back, had come again, had taken a seat in the dining-room, removed her bonnet, and expressed her intention of there remaining until she should see Mr. Hunter.

"As if I had not enough upon me without this!" muttered Mr. Hunter. "Go back," he said, aloud to the servant, "and tell Miss Florence that I am coming."

A few minutes given to the papers before him, a few hasty directions to Austin, touching the business of the hour, and Mr. Hunter rose to depart.

"Do not come back, sir," Austin repeated to him. "I can manage all."

When Mr. Hunter entered his own house, letting himself in with a latch key, Florence, who had been watching for him, glided forward.

"She is in there, papa," pointing to the closed door of the dining-room, and speaking in a whisper. "What is her business here? what does she want? She told me she had as much right in the house as I."

"Ha!" exclaimed Mr. Hunter. "Insolent, has she been?"

"Not exactly insolent. She spoke civilly. I fancied you would not care to see her, so I said she could not wait. She replied that she should wait, and I must not attempt to prevent her. Is she in her senses, papa?"

"Go up stairs and put your bonnet and cloak on, Florence," was the rejoinder of Mr. Hunter. "Be quick."

She obeyed, and was down again almost immediately, in her deep mourning.

"Now, my dear, go round to Dr. Bevary, and tell him you have come to spend the day with him."

"But, papa——"

"Florence, go! I will either come for you this evening, or send. Do not return until I do."

The tone, though full of kindness, was one that might not be disobeyed, and Florence, feeling sick with some uncertain shadowed-forth trouble, passed out at the hall door. Mr. Hunter entered the dining-room.

Tall, gaunt, powerful of frame as ever, rose up Miss Gwinn, turning upon him her white, corpse-like looking face. Without the ceremony of greeting, she spoke in her usual abrupt fashion, dashing at once to her subject.

"Now will you render justice, Lewis Hunter?"

"I have the greater right to ask that justice shall be rendered to me," replied Mr. Hunter, speaking sternly, in spite of his agitation. "Which has most cause to demand it, you or I?"

"She who reigned mistress in this house is dead," cried Miss Gwinn. "You must now acknowledge her."

"I never will. You may do your best and worst. The worst that can come is, that it must reach the knowledge of my daughter."

"Ay, there it is! The knowledge of the wrong must not even reach her; but the wrong itself has not been too bad for that other one to bear."

"Woman!" continued Mr. Hunter, growing excited almost beyond control, "who inflicted that wrong?—myself or you?"

The reproach told home, if the change to sad humility, passing over Miss Gwinn's countenance, might be taken as an indication. "What I said, I said in self-defence, after you, in your deceit, had brought wrong upon me and my family."

"That was no wrong," retorted Mr. Hunter. "It was you who wrought all the wrong afterwards, by uttering that terrible falsehood."

"Well, well, it is of no use coming back to that. I am come here to ask that justice shall be rendered, now that it is in your power."

"You have had more than justice—you have had revenge. Not content with rendering my days a life's misery, you must also drain me of the money I had worked hard to save. Do you know how much?"

"It was not I," she passionately uttered, in a tone as if she would deprecate his anger. "He did that."

"It comes to the same. I had to find the money. So long as my dear wife lived, I was forced to temporize: neither he nor you can so force me again. Go home, go home, Miss Gwinn, and pray for forgiveness for the injury you have done both her and me. The time for coming to my house with your intimidations is past."

"What did you say?" cried Miss Gwinn. "Injury upon you?"

"Injury, ay! such as rarely has been inflicted upon mortal man. Not content with that great injury, you must also deprive me of my substance. This week the name of James Lewis Hunter will be in the Gazette, on the list of bankrupts. It is you who have brought me to it."

"You know that I have had no hand in that: that it was he; my brother—and *hers*," she said. "He never should have done it had I been able to prevent him; in an unguarded moment I told him I had discovered you, and who you were, and he came up to you here and sold his silence. It is that which has kept me quiet."

"This interview had better end," said Mr. Hunter. "It excites me, and my health is scarcely in a state to bear it. Your work has told upon me, Miss Gwinn, as you cannot help seeing, when you look at me. Am I like the hearty, open man whom you came up to town and discovered a few years ago?"

"Am I like the healthy unsuspicious woman whom you saw some years before that?" she retorted. "My days have been rendered more bitter than yours."

"It is your own evil passions which have rendered them so. But I say this interview must end. You——"

"It shall end when you undertake to render justice."

"When your brother was here last—it was on the day of my wife's death—I was forced to warn him of the consequences of remaining in my house against my will. I must now warn you."

"Lewis Hunter," she passionately resumed, "for years I have been told that she—who was here—was fading; and I was content to wait until she should be gone. Besides, was not he drawing money from you to keep silence? But it is all over, and my time is come."

The door of the room opened and some one entered. Mr. Hunter turned to it with marked displeasure: he wondered who of the household was daring to intrude upon him. Not any servant; but Dr. Bevary.

When Florence reached her uncle's she found him absent: the servants said he had gone out early in the morning. Scarcely had Florence entered the drawing-room, when she saw his carriage drive up, and himself alight from it. He came in, and she told him her papa had despatched her to be his guest for the day. But there was something in her manner, as she spoke, foreign to its usual candid openness: the Doctor detected it, and he drew from her what had occurred.

"Miss Gwinn of Ketterford in town!" he uttered. And then, leaving Florence, he ran down the street, calling to his coachman, whose orders had been to put up the carriage. Had it been anybody but Dr. Bevary, the passers-by would have deemed the caller mad. The man heard, turned his horses, and came back.

"Miss Gwinn is the very person I was wanting to

see—wishing some marvellous telegraph could convey her hither at a moment's notice," he said to Florence. "Make yourself at home, my dear. I must go out again, and it is uncertain when I shall return."

He stepped into the carriage, ordering it round to Mr. Hunter's. There he broke in upon the interview.

"I was about to telegraph to Ketterford for you," he observed to Miss Gwinn.

The words agitated her strangely, as with a shrinking fear. She caught hold of the Doctor's arm. "What has happened? Any ill?"

"You must come with me now and see her."

Shaking from head to foot, gaunt, strong woman though she was, she turned docilely to follow the Doctor from the room. But suddenly an idea seemed to strike her, and she stood still.

"It is a *ruse* to get me out of the house. Dr. Bevary, I will not quit it until justice shall be rendered to Emma. I will have her acknowledged by him."

"Your going with me now will make no difference to that, one way or the other," drily observed Dr. Bevary.

Mr. Hunter stepped forward in agitation. "Are you out of your mind, Bevary? You could not have caught her words correctly."

"Psha!" responded the Doctor, in a careless tone. "What I said was, that Miss Gwinn's going out with me could make no difference to it one way or the other."

His bearing calm and self-possessed, his manner authoritative, Dr. Bevary passed out to his carriage, motioning the lady before him. Self-willed as she was by nature and by habit, she appeared to have no thought of resistance now. "Step in," said Dr. Bevary.

She obeyed, and he seated himself by her, after giving an order to the coachman. The carriage turned towards the west for a short distance, and then branched off to the north. In a comparatively short time they were clear of the bustle of London.

Miss Gwinn sat in silence; the Doctor sat in silence. It seemed that the former wished, yet dreaded to ask the purport of their present journey, for her white face was working with emotion, and she glanced repeatedly at the Doctor, with a sharp yearning look. When they were clear of the bustle of the streets, and the hedges, bleak and bare, bounded the road on either side, broken by a house here and there, then she could bear the silence and suspense no longer.

"Why do you not speak?" broke from her in a tone of pain.

"First of all, tell me what brought you to town now," was his reply. "It is not your time for being here."

"The death of your sister. I came up by the early train this morning. Dr. Bevary, you are the only living being to whom I lie under an obligation, or from whom I have experienced kindness. People may think me ungrateful; some think me mad; but I am grateful to you. But for the fact of her being your sister, I should have insisted upon my sister's rights being acknowledged long ago."

"You told me you waived them in consequence of your brother's conduct."

"Partially so. But that did not weigh with me in comparison with my feeling of gratitude to you. How impotent we are!" she exclaimed, throwing up her hands. "My efforts by day, my dreams by night, were directed to one single point through long, long years—the finding Lewis. I was determined to be revenged; I had cherished the thought of revenge until it became part and parcel of my very existence; I determined to expose him to the world. But when the time came, and I did find him, I found that your sister was his wife, and that

revenge could not be taken upon him without touching her. I hesitated; I took time to consider what course to pursue—whether to sacrifice gratitude or revenge. I went home to deliberate, and there some spirit of evil put it into my head to acquaint my good-for-nothing brother that the man, Lewis, was found. I might have known what would follow. He hastened to town, and drew large sums of money out of Mr. Hunter's fears. That decided me—to wait. Accounts said that your sister's could not be a prolonged life: and I have waited until now."

"Then you have come up—if I understand you aright—for the purpose of insisting upon what you call her 'rights'?" Is it so?"

"What *I* call!" retorted Miss Gwinn. "They are her rights. But tell me, Dr. Bevary, why are you taking me thither?"

"I received a message early this morning from Dr. Kerr, stating that—that something was amiss. I lost no time in going over."

"And what was amiss?" she hastily cried. "Surely there was no repetition of the violence? Did you see her?"

"Yes, I saw her."

"But of course you would," resumed Miss Gwinn, speaking rather to herself. "And what do you think? Is there danger?"

"The danger is past," replied Dr. Bevary. "But here we are."

The carriage had driven in through an inclosed avenue, and was stopping before a large mansion: not a cheerful mansion, for its grounds were surrounded by dark trees, and some of its windows were barred. It was a lunatic asylum. It is necessary, even in these modern days of gentle treatment, to take some precaution of bars and bolts; but the inmates of this one were thoroughly well cared for, in the best sense of the term. Dr. Bevary was one of its visiting inspectors.

Dr. Kerr, the resident manager, came forward, and Dr. Bevary turned to Miss Gwinn. "Will you see her, or not?" he asked.

Strange fears were working within her, Dr. Bevary's manner was so different from ordinary. "I think I see it all," she gasped. "The worst has happened."

"The best has happened," responded Dr. Bevary. "Miss Gwinn, you have requested me more than once to bring you here without preparation, should the time arrive—for that you could bear certainty, but not suspense. Will you see her?"

Her face had grown white and rigid as marble. Unable to speak, she pointed forward with her hand. Dr. Bevary drew it within his own to support her.

In a clean, cool chamber, on a pallet bed, lay the corpse of a woman. Dr. Kerr gently drew back the snow-white sheet, with which the face was covered—a pale, placid face, and a little band of light hair folded underneath the cap.

She—Miss Gwinn—did not stir: she gave way to neither emotion nor violence; but her bloodless lips were strained back from her teeth, and her face was white as that of the dead.

"God's ways are not as our ways," whispered Dr. Bevary. "You have been acting for revenge: he has sent peace. Whatsoever he does is for the best."

She made no reply: she remained still and rigid. Dr. Bevary stroked the left hand of the dead, lying in its utter stillness—stroked, as if unconsciously, the wedding-ring on the third finger. He had long believed that it had been placed on that finger, years and years ago, by his brother-in-law, James Lewis Hunter.

And she who had worked the lie, the delusion, who had embittered Mr. Hunter's life with the same dread belief, who had persisted in it still, up to that hour, stood there at the Doctor's side, looking at the dead.

Reader, it is a solemn thing to persist in the acting of a wicked falsehood, in the mysterious presence of death. The spirit has fled to where all truth must be brought to light: who is hardy enough not to bend under that solemn fact?

Not even Miss Gwinn. As Dr. Bevary turned to her with a remark upon the past, she burst forth into a cry, and gave utterance to words that fell upon the physician's ear like a healing balm, soothing and binding up a long open wound.

OUT FOR A SWEEP.

II.

CONTINUING our entomological pursuit, this little creature (*Pæderus littoralis*) with the long red body ending in a sharp black point, very short blue-black wing-cases, and black head, is a representative of the great clan of the Staphylinæ or "short wings" (*Brachelytra*). They have all an evil repute, owing to their habit of turning up their tails in a defiant way as they run. These said tails, however, are quite stingless, so that the apparent threat is nothing more after all than a little bit of innocent bravado on their part. The large black species (*Ocyphus olens*) so common in outhouses, and under stones and strawberry leaves in gardens, and which goes by various names, such as "palmer-worm," "canker-worm," or "soldier-worm," possesses very sharp teeth, and, as is well known to most schoolboys, is extremely pugnacious. The species of this family found in Britain amount to more than six hundred. Most of them are minute and plain-looking insects, and their favourite haunts are under stones, at the roots of grass, and in places far less savoury than these.

Here is a strange looking creature (*Athous haemorrhoidalis*) something like a bit of stick, its body long, glossy, and brown, with a black thorax and head, and very short black legs, which abounds all the summer long in the hedge banks. Just turn it over on its back. Whew! it has disappeared. However, here are plenty more of them; so hold this one securely, while I try to read you the riddle of its sudden evanishment. If you look closely at its under side, you will discover a sharp spine projecting from the hinder part of its breast, and fitting closely into a groove in the front of the abdomen. This spine is nothing else than a very strong spring, with which the insect goes to work in this wise. When laid on its back, it bends itself so that its head and tail alone are touching the ground, or whatever else it may be lying upon; this, of course, brings the spine up clear of the groove. It then gives itself a wriggle to one side, which causes the spine to catch upon a little ridge above the edge of the groove. Thence, by the aid of a wriggle to the other side, it falls back into its receptacle with such force, that the middle of the body, which a moment before was forming an arch in the air, is driven down against the substance on which it lies, with sufficient violence to cause the insect to rebound many times its own length. Its movements in doing this are so extremely rapid, that it cost me more than an hour of close and patient observation to discover how the spine acted—a point which had always been a great puzzle to me. You know what hard work it is for many of the beetles to recover their footing, when once they have been thrown upon their backs. If you take, for instance,

a stag-beetle, and lay him thus on his back upon a sheet of glass or any other quite smooth surface, he must lie in that position till he dies, unless helped round; and this in spite of his enormous muscular power. What a marvellous provision, then, for the little *elater's* comfort and safety is this, with which its bountiful Maker has endowed it! Observe, too, the cavities scooped out under its head to receive the antennæ, lest those most sensitive and essential organs should be injured in the fall. The infinite number and diversity of these minute tokens of an all-pervading Providence fill my soul with a more lively and solemn sense of the Divine presence than even the mighty ocean or the boundless firmament. They will at times reveal themselves to my mind in such rapid succession, as I pore upon flowers or insects, that I am quite overwhelmed, and well nigh constrained to kneel down then and there upon the green sod, and cry, "Surely this earth of ours is full of the wonderful works of God!"

But I must not give you time to grow weary of entomology at this your first introduction to it. You will soon, I hope, be firm and fast friends.* My old enemies, too, the shell snails (*Helix aspersa, nemoralis*, and *Cantiana*), have not been idle, I perceive, while I have been talking. I find them generally troublesome in this lane. They drop into the net, and, if I neglect to take them out at once, soon agglutinate its miscellaneous living contents into an unsightly, slimy, struggling mass. So let us away, prolonging our walk across the fields as far as Goodnestone, and just noticing any insect that may fall in our way: they will probably not be many, for the path lies chiefly through open corn-fields.

What a wide expanse of green level stretches away on our left, till it meets the narrow strip of blue sea, over which rise the hills of Sheppey. Before us are hills still higher, and well clothed with wood. Peering out of the trees on the rise is the grey tower of Hernhill Church; while the highest summit is crowned with that of Dunkirk, standing out in full sunshine above a thick belt of larches. On the right, Shottenden Hill makes itself very conspicuous, as it has a good right to do, seeing that, at the foot of the old black windmill on its top, is the highest spot of ground in all this part of the country. We will climb it together one of these days, if you please; and I am sure the prospect will amply repay you for the labour.

But look here at this brilliant scarlet beetle with the black comb-like antennæ revelling in the sweetness of the hawthorn blossoms that embower the stile. It is called *Pyrochroa coccinea*, an insect peculiar, I believe, to our country; but there is another species (*P. rubens*) extremely like it, though of rather duller hue, which is much more of a cosmopolite. My name for it is "His Eminence," for it always puts me in mind of the titular of Westminster arrayed in his pontificals.

How beautiful these hops are in their early June verdure—so fresh and healthy; but to see them in their full luxuriance of bine and burr, you must visit us again six weeks hence. See, there is an aspiring bine already overtaking its pole, and throwing its long graceful sprays out in search of kindred sprays to intertwine with them.

Merry is the music of the crickets (*Acheta campestris*) upon this warm bank. Their song is to me a peculiarly exhilarating one; it is one of those sounds which belong essentially to midsummer—to long sunny days, flowery

* I cannot too strongly recommend to all who may be desirous of acquiring the elements of insect classification, a right pleasant little book in Hawathic verse, entitled "The Insect Hunter," by Edward Newman, F.L.S.

fields, and swarming insect life. But, independently of such pleasant associations, the field cricket's song is to my ear a far more melodious performance than the ear-piercing shrill of the "cricket on the hearth" (*A. domesticus*). Did you ever notice that it is the only song which is sustained all through the fiery noonday hours, when the birds have retired into the shades for a siesta, and even the busy bees linger on their way half asleep in some deep flower-bell? I hardly know a deeper silence than prevails at such a time. Yet there are two sounds which are then at their ripest and loudest—the cricket's creak, and the pop, pop, popping of the gorse-pods.

But here we are at the quaint little church, which we proposed as our turning-point. Let us, however, lift the latch, and spend a few moments in the quiet church-yard. I always find it good to be there: it has a soothing, solemnizing effect to be lingering about the precincts of God's holy house. It helps to shake off the dust of earth's travel and turmoil: and if thoughts will come of the time when we must tenant each his green mound in "God's acre," need they—ought they to be unwelcome intruders? Ought they not rather to be sweet to a Christian's heart

"As a motherly lullaby?"

"I never can see a churchyard old,
With its mossy stones and mounds,
And green trees weeping the unforget.
That rest in its hallowed bounds;
I never can see the old churchyard,
But I breathe to God a prayer,
That, sleep as I may in this fevered life,
I may rest when I slumber there.
* * * * *
"And ever the bells in the green churchyard
Are tolling to tell us this:
'Go, pray in the church, while pray ye can,
That so ye may sleep in bliss'
And wise is he, in the glow of life,
Who weaveth his shroud of rest,
And graveth it plain on his coffin-plate,
That the dead in Christ are blest.
* * * * *
"I never loved cities of living men,
And 'towns of the dead' I hate;
Oh, let me rest in the churchyard, then,
And hard by the church's gate!
'Tis there I pray to my Saviour Christ,
And I will, till mine eye is dim,
That, sleep as I may in this fevered life,
I may rest at last in him."

So sweetly sings a voice across the mighty Atlantic. Oh! that we all were thus "wise, that we might understand this, and consider our latter end."

But homewards now, and with speedy steps, for that big black cloud that comes up so fast from the south means mischief. Hear you not already its muttered warnings in the distance? No time to think of insects now, when heaven's artillery hangs upon our rear.

Farewell, then, dear reader. One word at parting—if you have enjoyed our ramble this morning, do not wait for me to go with you next time. Even alone, you will find it far more enjoyable in reality than it can possibly be upon paper. Every step will disclose new objects of contemplation.

I do not remember to have seen noticed by any writer who has treated of the evidences of Divine wisdom in the arrangements of nature, an interesting fact connected with the seed-vessels of the violet family (*Violaceæ*). While they are yet immature, they are turned downwards under the shelter of the sepals, which form a kind of pent-house to screen them from rains and winds too rude, and suns too fiercely burning. As soon, however, as the seeds are full grown and need all the sun's heat to ripen them, the capsule uplifts itself and stands erect. The sepals also separate and fall back, now that

their watch and ward is no longer required, in order that, when the work of the sun is complete, they may offer no hindrance to the dispersion of the matured seeds. These, again, owing to the previous elevation of the capsule, of which mention has been made, are projected by the elastic valves over a wider surface round the parent plant than would have been possible had the capsule still hung as near to the ground as it did at first. "O, Lord! how excellent are thy works: in wisdom hast thou made them all!"

THE TALE OF A WEST-END SUBURB.

BY THE REV. JOHN STOUGHTON.

I.

THERE can be no mystery about it: we might call it *the* West-end suburb. For, is not Kensington without a rival? Our tale will be a patch-work piece—an "omnium gatherum"—only (for the sake of classical proprieties) as it must have a beginning and a middle, we promise—when perhaps the reader's patience is exhausted—that, in some way, it shall have an end. It will be made out of maps, and out of names, and out of old buildings, and out of time-stained records. It will be geological, antiquarian, biographical, and historical, with a sprinkling here and there of something else; for who can walk through an old town, any more than through an old forest, without recollecting,

"From hour to hour we ripe and ripe,
And then from hour to hour we rot and rot;
And thereby hangs a tale?"

We have a geological tale. Glancing at maps, we might say a good deal about the very early history of Kensington—its history before the flood—for a geological map of London and the neighbourhood shows the bed of blue clay, which gets its name from the locality, spreading out amidst the gravel, for which Kensington is famous. The blue clay contains many fossil remains, and, looking at them, we should be warranted to state that the earliest inhabitants were turtles and crocodiles, with some other of the awkward gentry which are preserved in museums, or are imitated in such a life-like way at Sydenham Palace. We fancy them, not crawling up and down the streets, nor swimming on the Serpentine, but amidst ferns of enormous height, and in streams which washed the banks where they grew, while a hot climate, like the tropics, sent down burning rays on these uncivilized Kensingtonites.

What Mrs. S. C. Hall, in her "Book of the Thames," says of the river, will apply to it in this locality. "It once swept, a mighty torrent, through forests of palms, and bore the fruits, which had fallen before the storm in countless myriads, down to its more spread delta, there to be preserved as memorials of a mighty past. The hippopotamus laved in its waters—the rhinoceros and the elephant dwelt upon its banks."

Looking at maps of England, as it was probably in British and Saxon times, we picture Kensington as a huge forest bordering a morass by the side of the river—then an estuary, by degrees narrowing all about Battersea and Thorney Isle—as Westminster was then called. Another set of inhabitants would appear, perhaps bears and wolves.

Under the Saxon kings there was little or nothing in the neighbourhood of particular interest: but parish maps, giving the boundaries and divisions of the districts, are instructive. They show how enormous are the dimensions of Kensington, and how much of it even now remains unpopulated. All the way from Little

Chelsea up to Kensal Green we walk without getting out of parochial bounds; so, likewise, across from Addison Road, down Earls Court, by Brompton, to the top of Sloane Street.

Examining into the meaning of names, we have an antiquarian tale. *Earls Court*. How often is the name used without any idea of its meaning! and yet, in these two little words there is embedded the memento of historical facts of the deepest interest. Earls Court derives its origin from the circumstance of the place so designated having been the site of the manor house belonging to the De Veres, Earls of Oxford, who were lords of the manor, and who there held their courts. The story of their connection with the neighbourhood goes back to the days of the Conquest, running through the middle ages, and gathering round it many an illustration of the days and doings of England's early time.

Let us open Domesday Book—that curious old record of our country's condition at the time when William of Normandy sat on the throne. The volume derives its name, the best antiquarians say, from its decisive authority as to the possessions and rights of the people of the land. It was really a book of doom or judgment for Saxon and Norman subjects; and by its name, it reminds us of another which is being written now every day by a Divine hand, to be read at the last day at the gathering of all nations. Let us open Domesday Book, and there, in queer old cramped and contracted words, we find an entry with regard to the Manor of Chenesit, or Chenisiton; and those queer old contracted words are like the equally queer old contracted windows in very old houses, through the little diamond panes of which sundry things may be seen all round about. Here we meet at once with the name of Aubrey De Vere, who is said to hold Chenesit, or Kensington, of the Bishop of Constance, (or Coutance?) Chief Justiciary of England. What an outlook at once into English history is there! It shows us that our native island had been subjugated by the Norman duke; that he had extended over its soil from east to west his measuring line of proprietorship; that the bishop appointed by the Conqueror Chief Justiciary of England had got a slice of the subdued territory; that he held it as a grand feudal official; that he parcelled out his portion again amongst noble dependents, and that to Aubrey De Vere had fallen the possession of the lands in Kensington.

It appears that in the manor there was as much arable land as it took ten ploughs to till, which simple fact, in our imagination, at once becomes a rural picture; and there are seen in Kensington, under the Conqueror, in mid-winter, six Saxon husbandmen in their scanty costume, driving their big-wheeled ploughs yoked to two pair of oxen. Four of the ploughs belonged to the demesne or lord's land, that which lay nearest to the manor house or mansion—the fields answering to Earls Court; the other six belonged to *villans*, of whom altogether there were twelve in Kensington, besides seven bondmen or serfs. *Villans* and *serfs*. Most important distinction! Many writers confound them, and represent *villans* as serfs. *Villans*, however, are here recognised as having personal rights, as holding land and possessing ploughs, and therefore could not be serfs or slaves—in whom all personal rights were extinguished, and who were the mere goods and chattels of the master. The *villan's* rights, however, were so conditioned and abridged, that he could not do what he liked with his property; he could neither sell nor leave it. He was, in fact, a sort of prisoner in his own possessions, of which his feudal superior, the manor lord, kept the key. One has heard the story of the soldier who professed to have taken a prisoner.

"Bring him here," said an officer.

"Please, sir, he won't let me."

The fact was, the captive had the grip on the captor, and so the little Saxon farmers of Kensington, years ago, found that while they claimed to hold the land, the land really had hold of them. Doomsday Book notices a priest, so there must have been a church at Kensington; and pasture for the cattle of the town, by which we understand "common" for the use of the few people in the manor; not that there was anything answering to a town then. Pannage or wood for swine, and arpents of vineyards are also mentioned, from which we conclude there were forests of oak and beech, shedding acorns and mast in abundance, on which hogs fattened, tended by one of the serfs as swineherd, who would drive the grunters through the bright glades of the forests on a summer morning as the dew lay thick on the grass; and vineyards, too, we see, indicating that the culture of the grape was more common than it is now, which other antiquarian facts confirm; perhaps warranting us to conclude that the climate of England was milder in those days, and thus opening up questions of meteorological history. The record winds up with a statement that the manor had been possessed by Edwin, a thane of King Edward the Confessor, who had the power to sell it. Aubrey de Vere had not such power without the consent of his feudal superior. The statement, therefore, records an immense feudal change. If this seems dry to some, we hope our readers will see that it contains curious and important information, having more than a local interest, showing how a few words may open many inquiries; how one branch of knowledge intersects another; and how, from a word or two, hints may be gathered illustrative of the history and social condition of a people, as from a single fossil jawbone the geologist can draw a sketch of the entire mammoth.

Well, Earls Court sends us to Doomsday Book, and there we are plunged into the midst of the feudal system. Kensington is found to be a feudal village, of which the centre, in point of importance, though not as to local position, is the court of the manor house. There the business of the De Vere family is done for ages afterwards, so far as this their manor is concerned. The De Veres become Earls of Oxford, lords chamberlain, tenants of the king in chief, instead of holders under any bishop or chief justiciaries. From time to time there are inquiries into the extent and value of the manor, and it is entertaining to trace the progress of things—how the meadows are mowed at three shillings an acre, and more and more land becomes arable, and so the harvests at Kensington are richer; and a windmill is built, and a dove-house appears among the vines round the manor house, and a pond and ditch come into view, no doubt decked with ducks and geese for Midsummer and Michaelmas. A little later, and in the court books there are entries of payment in kind to the lord of the manor, of 115 eggs at Easter, price of thirty eggs, 1d., and twenty-three cocks, price of each, 1d.

In Edward I's time, there comes to Earls Court a writ *quo warranto*, to summon the Earl to answer for his claims as a feudal lord; and among other things, which we have not time to explain, we find mention of the uncouth claims of *infangath* and *ufangath*. What can they mean? They are Saxon words, expressing the right of catching thieves and hanging them—the lords' right of catching them on other people's land, and hanging them on his own. The right of catching was claimed by the Earls De Vere, but not the right of hanging. So there was not to be seen at Earls Court in those days, what was seen in the court yard of some noble barons, namely,

a gallows, which, according to the rank of the baron, was made of one post, two posts, or three. To hang on a gallows of three posts was a high privilege indeed.

One can easily picture what Earls Court was in the middle ages. Here we are by the porch of the manor house, pleasant, rose-covered, my lord's steward dwelling in it, his young daughter there plucking the grapes of the vine, or watching the flight of pigeons from the dovecote. A thief has been caught stealing some corn, and he is tried in the court yard by the Earl's representative and the neighbouring villans. Summary punishment is inflicted. John, the thatcher, living near the church, has quarrelled with William, the blacksmith over the way; the one challenges the other, and they have fought it out with clubs, in the courtyard. There is a woodman coming in with a load of timber from the forest, and there are boys with fowls and eggs, and there is another with a basket of fish, come to pay tenant dues. There has been a grand gathering at Westminster, of the king's nobles, and De Vere, Earl of Oxford, comes riding up to the gate of the court, with some knights, just to speak to his steward, or to transact some important business.

Talking of important business, some of the most important recorded consists of the alienation of parts of the manor, and the creation of distinct manors. Kensington gets divided into the manor of Earls Court, (original,) and the manor of West Town, (part of the parish west of the church,) the manor of Abbots, (which we shall presently explain,) and the manor of Knotting, or Nutting Barns. In process of time, as the feudal system is modified and declines, the villans rise into freedom, and out of the old feudal tenants, whom the land laid hold of in the unpleasant manner we described, there came copyhold tenants holding lands of the lord of the manor, on terms and privileges which may be seen fully set down in Faulkner's "History of Kensington." And thus the story of Earls Court, and the manors springing out of it, runs on through the space of eight centuries; and at one end of the tale—the modern end—we have a number of copyhold tenants, gentlemen wearing the costume of the early part of the nineteenth century, with blue coats and top boots or gaiters, meeting the steward or lawyer, perhaps at some old-fashioned tavern, round a table covered with papers tied up with red tape—afterwards round a table covered with something more fragrant and savoury than paper and tape;—and at the other end of the tale, centuries before, a mailed knight and squire, with a few bare-legged peasants, clad in short coats of serge. The two groups, centuries apart, are typical of very different kinds of civilization—the one of legal bondage, the other of almost legal freedom; yet the one a discipline for the other, ay, and containing in it, too, the seeds of the other. The contrasts are connected by intermediate bonds—the earlier centuries prepare for the nineteenth, the stream of national life and power purifying and widening as it flows, like a rock-crushed torrent dashing on its way, and widening and deepening itself into a richly laden river.

Another significant Kensington name is *St. Mary Abbots*. We have just mentioned the division of the original manor, and the denomination of one part of it as Abbots Manor. St. Mary is the saint to whom the church is dedicated: hence the combination of the two names. But whence comes that of Abbots? There never was any abbey in Kensington. But there was a very magnificent abbey at Abingdon, and hence comes the now so well-known appellation. But what had Abingdon to do with Kensington? We shall see.

One of the lords of the Manor House, Godfrey de Vere, who lived in the reign of Henry I, upon a time fell

sick. Where he was then living we do not know, but a certain Fabricius, at the time Abbot of Abingdon, visited him, and was the means of restoring him to health. Many ecclesiastics in those days were skilled in the healing art, and we suppose that he of the Abingdon Abbey was famous for his knowledge of diseases and drugs. At any rate, under his care the baron got well. He appears to have died, after all, a young man, and on his death-bed, with the consent of his father and mother, and his brothers, he gave to the Abbey of Abingdon, in token of gratitude, the church of the manor of Kensington, with 120 acres of land in the parish, for the abbots to have and to hold as lords superior—they reaping the revenues of the lands so allotted, and also the tithes pertaining to the church, at the same time providing a priest to discharge the duties. So between Kensington and Abingdon there sprung up a close connection; and doubtless the abbot on his way from London, after attending on the king, seated on his palfrey, accompanied by some of his monks, might be seen passing through Kensington to glance at the church, and to speak to the vicar, and to inquire about the lands and tithes. One can further picture him ambling along the rural highways, and going up the pleasant country lane under the trees which ran up into the Oxford Road—then the great highway at the west end—and so pursuing his journey home till he reached the gates of his far-famed abbey. Oftener would some steward or servant of the monastery come to Kensington to see after the corn and the timber which belonged to my Lord of Abingdon; and here we get a glimpse of the feudalism of the church in the middle ages—how abbots were lords of manors—how distant parishes became dependent on them—how they derived tithes and revenues from sources remote, and exercised jurisdiction miles and miles away from the boundary of their convent walls. It is curious to note how, from this circumstance, Kensington got entangled with the priory of Colne St. Andrew in Essex—also dependent on Abingdon and founded by the De Veres, and, like Kensington, by them given to the great Berkshire abbot. Now came disputes about the appointment of the Kensington priest. The Prior of Colne claimed the appointment; the abbot resisted the claim. The Bishop of London, as diocesan, at length asserted his right; and it was settled that the abbot should have the corn, and the bishop the collation.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, the large tithes were transferred from the abbey to the crown, and by the crown were granted to one Sir Edward Carey, since which they have been held by a succession of lay rectors. One might have supposed that the counter claims of the manor lord and the Bishop of London, about appointing to the vicarage, would have died away at the Reformation, if not long before. But, strange enough, they sprung up in more than their original force at the beginning of the last century; and the old rope that bound Kensington to Abingdon was raked out of the rubbish of time, and was dangled about by the then Earl of Warwick, master of Holland House, and lord of the manor of St. Mary Abbots. The old rope had been torn from the hand of the abbots, and held by the king, and he had given it to somebody else—and now it belonged to the noble family above named; and they tugged at it, and said the presentation to the church was a manorial right, which had come to them from the crown, and to the crown from the abbey. But the Bishop of London in the eighteenth century, like his predecessor in the thirteenth, protested against this as a usurpation, and one Sunday, about 150 years ago, the unseemly spectacle was presented in the church, of two

clergymen coming to do duty—one, the earl's nominee, going up into the belfry to ring himself in, and thence to the reading pew to officiate; while another, appointed by the bishop, was there for the same purpose—the congregation, as they well might, wondering at the strange confusion.

Whereupon cases were submitted, and petitions were drawn up, and proceedings in the Court of Arches were instituted, and old rolls and records were examined, and stories about the Abbot of Abingdon and the Vicar Roger, and the Bishop of London in 1260, were revived. The dispute ended in the establishment of the metropolitan prelate's claim, by whose authority all vicars have for ages been appointed. It is curious and instructive to see, wherever we turn, how modern events are related to very ancient ones—how fresh feuds burn up out of embers supposed to be extinguished—how laws and customs, and rights and claims, run back for ages to seek for resting-grounds—how plainly the present depends on the past, and how history and antiquarianism are of daily use to settle questions of practical importance.

A TRIP TO NORTH DEVON.

CHAPTER II.—ALONG THE COAST.

Our first exploration of the coast in a westerly direction is by an afternoon's walking, or rather climbing, on the backs of the high precipitous Torrs, whose harsh outlines form the limit to the landscape as viewed along the shore from the Capstone. The Torrs would hardly be practicable to the mass of visitors if they had remained in their savage state, so steep and rugged are their fronts towards the sea; but they have been taken in hand by the proprietor of the soil, and paths, extending for many a mile, have been wound round the steep acclivities, and here and there seats have been cut in the solid rock for the accommodation of weary pedestrians. In return for these conveniences the visitor pays a small fee for admission, and, once past the wicket-gate, may wander at his own discretion. It is from various points on the ascent towards these dreary summits that the finest and most comprehensive views of the immediate neighbourhood of Ilfracombe are obtained. The town, with the whole valley in which it lies—the broad mass of Hillsborough, with the dim grey points and ridges that stretch away towards Bristol—the harbour, so snugly embayed within the embrace of the dark rocks—and the wide sea, spotted with sails white in the sunshine, or dark in the cloud shadows, and the faint blue line that marks the Welsh coast—all are displayed at once in one wide panoramic picture. Far more beautiful and picturesque, however, are the seaward faces of these rugged rock masses, with the bold projections and deep cavernous recesses which they oppose to the ocean winds; everywhere the dark tints of the decaying stone are contrasted with hues of the most vivid green; for verdure seems to have triumphed over decay, and has draped in the richest vegetation the wrecks that time has made. It is impossible by mere words to convey any idea of the wealth of colour exhibited in this strange landscape, in which all the elements that usually go to form a picture on a level surface are here in a manner raised almost to the perpendicular, and by catching the sun's rays at less angle produce effects at once violent in their nature and startling from their novelty. At a distance one would imagine these abrupt peaks to be bare, and one's surprise is all the greater to find them covered, not only with ferns of all varieties, but with countless shrubs and dwarf trees, and with samples of well-nigh every wild-flower the climate can

produce. What may be the distance from the sea-level to the top of the highest Torr we cannot pretend to say; but we have a notion that the pedestrian may make it extend over many hours if he choose to explore all the paths laid out for his accommodation.

Our next excursion extends to a greater distance. Leaving the town at its western extremity, we pass the little Wilder, and with the Torrs at our right hand, and the high ground of Langley Cleve at our left, ascend a long steep lane, which, after a climb of about two miles, lands us upon an open down, called Langley Open. Here, on making for the highest ground, we find ourselves above the Torrs, for we can see over their summits, and over distant Hillsborough, too, having a view of the Hangman beyond. The view from this elevation has a dreary kind of grandeur, which is very striking, but somewhat oppressive. As we advance, the coast line begins to dip towards the sea; the high ground to the left shuts out the view of all human habitation; there is not a sign of life visible, save it be a couple of partridges, upon whom we almost set our foot, and who fly past our face with a startling whirr, denoting how seldom their solitude is broken. But the next minute the little bay of Lee opens upon us, with its white houses and cultivated fields and green wooded back-ground. In the fields the corn is being cut, and we hear the voices of the reapers at their work. We can hear the clattering and splashing of the mill-wheel, and see the white spray dashing from it, as it is turned by a small stream, which, having done that one stroke of work, loses itself in the ocean—reminding us of many a young life spent in one good deed, and then passing away.

Lee is a charming little village, affording a spectacle which one would hardly dare to look for on this desolate coast. It is shut in on our right by a lofty hill, covered with wood, and is sheltered on all sides, save towards the sea, by high lands protecting it from wintry winds.

Leaving the village of Lee, we soon begin to ascend again, sometimes by gentle slopes and sometimes sharply enough, now almost skirting the coast, and now—so irregular is the coast line—leaving it a mile or more to the right. The route is for the most part over cultivated ground, which, however, seems to yield but a small reward to the husbandman, the grain crops on the exposed lands being thin and stunted, and the grass crops, which have just been prostrated by the scythe, being fit only for the food of donkeys, which abound in this neighbourhood.

Soon after leaving Lee we catch sight of the square tower of the old church of Morthoe, (or Morte, as the inhabitants call it,) which stands on a sort of promontory at an angle of the coast where it suddenly curves southward. This village on its dreary hill top, exposed to “a’ the airts the wind can blaw,” is the most desolate-looking place it was ever our lot to see. There is entertainment for travellers, and plenty of excellent Devonshire cream to be had at the sole inn, the “Chichester Arms,” which is itself but a sort of magnified cottage; but, except the inn and the parsonage house, there seems to be hardly a decent dwelling in the place. The old church, however, is well worth a visit, and presents matter of more than ordinary interest. It was built about seven hundred years ago by Sir William De Tracy, who was one of the assassins of Thomas à Becket, in expiation of his crime. The village was at that time the property of the De Tracy family, and here the murderer, smitten with remorse, passed the latter years of his life, endeavouring to atone by penitence and charitable deeds for his heinous sin. Certainly a more dismal spot could hardly be selected by one who wanted

to banish all cheerful thoughts. Even beneath the warm glow of an August sun it looks dreary and desolate, and when the wintry tempests roar around it, and the angry sea lashes the jagged fangs of rock that fringe the strand below, the scene must be pregnant with horrors to a mind struggling with remorse.

On entering the church we are struck with the quaint carving of the pews and timber work, the whole of which has lately been renewed or restored by the present incumbent. Windows of coloured glass have also been added, and the whole of the interior is striking, from the harmony and propriety of the decorations and their thorough keeping with the old architecture of the edifice. In a kind of side chapel, to the right of the pulpit, stands, quite alone, the gigantic mausoleum of the penitent knight; the sides are of carved stone, the designs rounded by age, and the top is a huge black slab, on which is graven a rude outline of the knight clad in what appears to be a priestly robe—or a shroud; and there is an inscription in Norman characters, and in Norman French, which is not very legible at present, but which serves to inform us that "Here lies Sir William De Tracy. May God have mercy upon his soul."

Passing through a gate in the fore-court of the inn, we are on the road that winds down, through undulating slopes of grass land, to the little bay of Barricane. This curious bay is one of the wonders of North Devon, and it certainly presents a singular anomaly not easily accounted for. We catch sight of it at some distance, and remark that several groups of visitors have taken up their quarters within it, some of whom are searching for treasures, while others are kindling their fires for tea-making under the lee of the rocks. We run down, and descend into it by a rude flight of steps dug in the soil, and find ourselves in a little land-locked parallelogram, not much larger than the area of Westminster Hall. It is the floor of this limited space which forms the subject of general admiration, and it may well be the subject of wonder, seeing that it is composed entirely of shells, or fragments of shells. It is possible that there may be some thousand tons of the loose material upon which you walk, and into which you may thrust your arms up to the shoulder; but you cannot find a particle of matter that is not a shell or a piece of a shell. The sea comes tumbling into the bay over a confused pile of submerged rocks, and it may be owing to this, as well as to the trampling of the visitors' feet, that the vast majority of the shells are broken to fragments. If you want them entire, however, you may have them, either by searching patiently yourself, or by purchasing them from the women and children who gather them on the spot, and who will not let you depart, if they can help it, until they have saddled you with a bargain. What renders the bay of shells at Barricane more remarkable, is the fact that on looking for shells at those accessible parts of the coast nearest to it, we could not find even the trace of any.

Not more than a mile westward from Barricane, we came upon the eastern horn of Woollacombe Bay—a place as remarkable as Barricane, but for totally different reasons. A nobler site for a magnificent city could hardly be conceived. The bay is a perfect half-circle, with a sweep of three clear miles in diameter, or more than four in circumference, and it is protected at the west by a projecting bluff running far out to the sea. If at Barricane there is nothing but shells, here there is nothing but sand—golden sand, so fine as to trickle through an hour-glass without sifting, and so plentiful as to cover the shore for many feet in depth. This is the paradise of

bathers, and numbers repair hither for the purpose, as the water is shallow for half a mile out, and the bottom is everywhere a carpet to the feet.

We accept the advantage of bathing in the bay—which, vast as it is, presents a perfect solitude—and then return to the inn along the coast ridge. Morthoe, or Morte, derives its name from the Morte stone, or the Rock of Death, a designation as old as the Norman era, and which was anciently bestowed upon a ridge of sunken rocks, which have proved fatal to many unfortunate vessels driven upon them. We see the deathful rocks partly submerged in the flood, while the breakers are dashing over them and the white scud flies along their surface like snowflakes in a storm. The frequency of wrecks on this wild coast has had a most disastrous and demoralizing effect on the inhabitants dwelling near, who for generations past have gained their livelihood by plundering the property cast on shore, and disputing with the helpless cast-away the possession of his goods. It is even said that many a poor sailor, whom the waves had spared and thrown on shore, has been massacred by the inhuman wreckers, to prevent his depriving them of their prey. In a memorial presented to the government but a few years ago, praying for the erection of a lighthouse on the Morte Stone, these appalling facts are adduced in support of the petition. The frequent wrecks would appear to be due chiefly to the prevalence of fogs on the coast in winter, and the action of the current, which sets in towards the submerged ridge of rocks.

After a comfortable rest and rather luxurious tea at the inn, we set forth on a visit to Rockham Bay, which lies eastward of Morte, and which is remarkable for its rocky seclusion and wild romantic character. Our way lies through the village, and across a number of half-cultivated fields and barren heathy knolls. The bay itself is scarcely bigger than that of Barricane, but it is more closely shut in, and wears a much more lonely aspect. Like Barricane, it is often the resort of visitors, who find here, not shells, but clear white pebbles, capable of cutting and polishing to a beautiful surface, together with fragments of malachite, of quartz and rough crystals, with other fossil specimens cast up by the tide. The view looking seaward is grand but threatening, and wants but a roof over-head to resemble the look-out from a rocky cavern.

The sun is getting low as we quit this wild spot and turn our faces homeward. For the sake of varying our route, we leave Morte by the long lane which connects it with the post road, and within an hour have left behind us all those wild elements of waste and desolation, and are plodding along the highway to Ilfracombe. As we look around us on the lovely landscape we are hardly able to credit the fact, that in so short a space of time we have changed so savage a scene for one of such pastoral beauty as that which is smiling around us under the cheerful rays of the declining sun.

ADVENTURES ON LAKE SUPERIOR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ENGLISHWOMAN IN AMERICA."

II.—THE "METROPOLIS OF THE NORTH-WEST."

It was a delightful transition from the sultry steaming heat of Florida to the bracing coolness of the northern lakes; but it was hardly less delightful, after a week of buffeting with storm and sleet, to awake and find that we had sailed into the summer, and that a solemn stillness pervaded the motionless air. The waters slept as if wearied with their exertions, and a haze, blue and soft as that of the Indian summer, lay on the waving coast line and the gently swelling hills. As I looked

upon this fair scene from my state-room window, my thoughts naturally shaped themselves into Montgomery's beautiful lines—

" Still, as the light of morning broke
O'er island, continent, and deep,
Thy wide-spread family awoke,
Sabbath all round the world to keep."

My sabbatic dream did not last long, and the portion of the world's family shut up in our ship evidently had not awoke to keep the sabbath; for I heard unmistakeable sounds of sawing and planing, and when I went on deck I found carpenters and painters busy in finishing the woodwork, and in obliterating the traces of the rubbing and buffeting of our voyage. Before the evening came, the ship was staring white, from her hurricane-deck to the water-line. There were no signs of the sabbath on board; work went on as usual; the only tokens of respect for the day were that there was less gambling in the saloon and no glee-singing. This Lake Superior locality is very heathenish. In some districts inhabited by English mining emigrants, any observance of the sabbath has been abandoned, and indeed it is not surprising that, at a distance from ordinances and religious influences, such should be the case. On a later occasion, in these western wilds, two friends and I found that we had so "lost count" that we had kept the sabbath on a Monday.

At noon we arrived at Ontonagon, a favourite summer resort, situated on a strip of land near the richest copper mines in the world. Shortly before our visit a block of *pure copper* weighing 700 tons was discovered in these mines. The strips of it which were brought on board were as bright as a new halfpenny. The report of this discovery caused a rise of 100 per cent. in the shares; but the expense and difficulty of removing this mass bit by bit must have been great, as the chisels and other tools became blunted after a few minutes use. Of course, being the sabbath, we did not visit these mines, and, after a short detention, were again under way up the lake.

We sat all the evening at the bow, enjoying the air, fragrant with the scent of pines, and speculating upon the great City of Superior, which we expected to reach early in the morning. We passed among the Apostles' Islands, which extend for thirty miles, and as the glowing twilight deepened into night their grotesque forms were only visible against a red glare thrown across the water by a mile of blazing forest. We were all admiring the speed at which the vessel was running—thirteen miles an hour, with a steam pressure of 80lbs., and all was going "merry as a marriage bell," when, with a shock and an upheaving the ship struck, and we were all thrown upon the floor. I had seen the ripple of shoal water ahead, having become quite expert in detecting it on the Mississippi, but my eyes were quicker than the pilot's, and we had run upon a shoal. "Hallo," shouted the captain, who was piloting the ship on the hurricane-deck. "What's that?" "Oh dear, oh dear! what is the matter?" cried numbers of people, who rushed out of the saloon headed by the owner, with streaming hair and a despairing face. To me the whole seemed so ludicrous, and so deliberately done, and so like many other western experiences, that I could not help laughing. The engines were set to work and reversed, and shook the ship with their frantic efforts, but in vain. Next, two anchors and hawsers were carried out astern; but, as soon as a strain was applied, the anchors "came home," as the sand afforded no holding ground. So there we were in the dark, hard and fast.

Drip, drip, drip—the sound of soft rippling and gentle plashing nearer and nearer, the loud murmur of many voices, and bark canoes, apparently innumerable,

filled with Indians surrounded our boat. They were very peaceful in their intentions, and the burden of the long conversation which they held with our Indian pilot was a sad one. "We are almost naked and very hungry, but we would not tell this in the wigwams of our brethren; go, tell our great father that his red children are hungry." Their tale was true; their stock of powder was exhausted, and all along the lake hundreds of these poor aborigines, almost without food and clothing, were waiting for the allowance which they annually receive from the United States government. When they found that the United States agent was not on board, they departed after having told us our position. A canoe laden with French-speaking half-breeds next came along with the welcome news that a large "bateau" was lying at a Jesuit mission station, two miles off. Some of our crew soon returned with this, and after unloading most of our cargo and removing all heavy weights to the stern, the ship was backed off after being a-ground for six hours.

Every one was in a great state of excitement next morning, for the goal of our journey of 2000 miles was now near. People put on their best clothes, boxes were dragged out of cabins and piled on deck, maps were consulted, newspaper descriptions were read aloud, and finally, the large coloured plan of the City of Superior was brought out and eagerly pored over. As yet there was no sign of the mighty metropolis, even from the hurricane-deck, to which many of us pertinaciously clung, though the narrowing lake was an expanse of angry water, and the foam, in spin-drift, was flying over our bow. Still, the lake narrowed, and the precipitous hills of Minnesota, clothed to their summits with wood, bounded it on the north. Now two curious tongues of sand projected from either side, leaving a narrow channel, through which it appeared we were to pass into a larger bay beyond. The water was very red and very shallow, and soundings were anxiously taken as fast as a man could heave the lead. "Five fathoms," then down to "quarter less three—half two—two under water—eleven feet—ten feet," (the boat drew nine at the stern,) then "half two" again, and so on, the boat "steering wild," and scraping the ground constantly both in the channel and bay.

After fairly entering the bay, formed by the mouth of the St. Louis River, "the metropolis of the north-west" burst upon our astonished view. There, in this vast wilderness, was "the mighty City of Superior," with "its wharves of two miles long, its grand railroad dépôt, its superb churches, its hotel, the finest in the north-western states, its masonic hall, its newspaper offices, from which emanate the statements which are copied even into the London "Times;" the head of inland navigation, the terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad, the port through which the wealth of China and Japan is to roll to Europe; all this on paper and in the speeches of western land speculators. There we were, grouped on the hurricane-deck, captain and crew, emigrants bound for a new El-Dorado, families who had left all to make their fortunes here, and tourists, like ourselves, who had travelled 2000 miles to see this western wonder. The captain was the only person who had been there before, and surveyed us all with a roguish twinkle in his eye, as the actual Superior City came into view. A bank rises from the sedges and water plants on the margin of the bay, and in a partially cleared space about a fourth of a mile long, fifty or sixty wooden houses, or rather shanties, stood, some painted white, others of unplanned deal, and behind and around, to uncomputed distances, stretched the dark forests. This was the whole city. In place of granite wharves there was a single ruinous jetty of round logs, and "the fleet of ships" consisted of a

little steam tug, laboriously dragging a raft of saw logs, a few Indian canoes, two leaky bateaux, and a small rowing boat. The "magnificent harbour" varies in depth from two to twelve feet, and during an east wind no vessels can leave it. The water is red, and this necessary, when filtered, is sold at twopence a glass. The jetty, built over mud and swamp, extends a quarter of a mile into the bay, and as we made fast to it we received a salute from all the fire-arms in the place.

The inhabitants of this "bogus" city, anticipating a great trade, or thinking to secure one by this means, requested Cleveland for a propeller for their especial use, and presented it with twenty-one flags, at a cost of 250 dollars. As we neared, the propeller looked long enough to swallow the whole place, and gay enough to have absorbed all its wealth. From her imitation bowsprit gaily flaunted the symbol of the western constellation—a blue flag with white stars. From the loftiest pole on her upper deck, floated a flag of crimson silk, twenty-one feet long, with "City of Superior" emblazoned in gold letters on it. From the gaff puffed in arrogance the boast of this aspiring city, a rich green banner bearing on it a silver locomotive, inscribed, with the hope of the future, "Northern Pacific Railroad." Seventeen poles with seventeen flags, each inscribed with the name of a part on the lake, waved from our upper deck, and a "liberty pole" surmounted them all, from which grandly streamed the starry flag of the United States, sixteen feet long, flourishing over our heads, as the sign of universal empire.

The whole population turned out, swarming over the mud heaps and crowding the jetty, and giving us three ringing cheers and a "tiger," which the hills of Minnesota echoed back. The mob boarded our boat, some swarming up the fenders, others scrambling up the chains, the most coming in the lawful way, rushing over it like savages, cheering, hooting, and yelling, while one stout fellow swam astern to examine the screw. It was a motley horde: English, Irish, Germans, French, Americans, Negroes, Indians, half-breeds, and those athletic pioneers, who are the foam of that gigantic wave of emigration, whose surges are now breaking far, far away upon the Rocky Mountains and the shores of the Pacific. These are the wild Western men, who clear the forest, fill up the morasses, and lay the foundations of mighty cities, but move further towards the setting sun at the first touch of civilization. Some were dressed entirely in leather, but many wore scarlet shirts richly embroidered on the collars and fronts by Indians, leather belts used to suspend bowie knives and revolvers, and loose pantaloons, stuffed into high boots, besmeared with red clay. I hardly saw one without finger-rings and ear-rings. The beards were of all descriptions. There were some very handsome Indians in scarlet blankets, and a few pretty young squaws, their magnificent hair coiled in plaits round their heads, and their complexions heightened with vermillion. These true daughters of Eve surveyed themselves with undisguised pleasure in our full-length mirrors.

The city, on closer inspection, appeared to even less advantage than from the water. The walk along the jetty was one of constant risks of falling through the loosely laid logs into the water, and it terminated in a quaking bog, which we crossed on planks, leading to some wretched Irish shanties, surrounded by green puddles emitting pestiferous odours. Then there was a clay bank with some slimy steps leading to the only "street," a ravine full of liquid mud, which has for side walks high planks. Ruffianly as the inhabitants are said to be, I observed that the men invariably stepped off these planks into mud up to their knees when they met a lady. Along

this "ravine" are small frame houses, (the brick foundations of which had made a voyage of eleven hundred miles,) interspersed with the ruder log cabins of the earliest settlers. None of the houses looked as if they had been "put up" for more than six months, and all which are not stores are law and land offices, where you can purchase land as easily as candies. Some of the houses were on hillocks, others in holes, and some are approached on planks laid over a swamp. This "street" has a road, such as it is, from which the trees have been cleared for a quarter of a mile, leaving the charred stumps, and tangled bramble, and huckleberry bushes. This is the Broadway of Superior, and such faith have its people in the future, that they have imported vehicles from the east, though the forest comes up to their doors. The chief hotel possesses an omnibus, whose peregrinations are limited to a distance of four hundred yards. This hotel has two bedrooms, each fitted up with about twenty-five berths in tiers of three. The other main features are "saloon taverns," outside of which the inhabitants sit drinking corn spirit, and tilting their chairs; stores in which cooking stoves and whisky are the principal commodities; pigs, lean dogs, heaps, quagmires, and old shoes. I visited a store, and found, besides the articles above mentioned, crocks of butter, barrels of eggs, corn, wheat, and other heavy eatables; tobacco of all kinds, and spruce gum for chewing—for here the ladies chew—and against the wall a painted clock dial with the significant words, "No tick Here."

Superior is said to be the most lawless place in all the West—full of cheating, drinking, fighting, and duelling: peopled by the outlawed desperadoes of all the Western cities.

We spent the evening in preparations for an inland journey, and in entertaining the "aristocracy" of Superior at a sumptuous supper. The tables were laid for one hundred and eighty, and groaned with stuffed pork, eight boiled turkeys, two buffalo humps, and twenty dishes of onions and potatoes. The meal was served two hours after midnight, and some of the guests boasted that they had eaten nothing for three days. Although it was a temperance ship, champagne flowed like water, and was drank from large tumblers, which were replenished five times! After supper the company became excited. They drank successively "the owners," "the captain," and "success to the vessel," and the owner proposed, "the City of Superior," which was drunk with uproarious enthusiasm, the whole party rising to give three times three and one cheer more, each man clinking his tumbler against that of his neighbour. After this, four men brought in the huge flag of the stars and stripes and hung it at the head of the table, when a magnificent Kentuckian rose and presented the superb set of flags before mentioned to the propeller. This Kentuckian used every species of Western exaggeration, and inflated his ideas till they rose as empty nothings. He made a descriptive speech, which might have suited London or New York, and applied colossal epithets to this infant settlement. The owner next rose, and endorsed the nonsense of the other speakers, and roamed into the wildest imaginations as he prophesied the future of Superior. He dilated on the flag of the North Pacific Railroad, and described in glowing language the grand dépôt, thronged with cars, the interminable wharves, crowded with shipping bound for all the ports of Europe, and the wealth of China and Japan pouring to England and France through the mighty city of Superior. Much more followed in this prophetic strain, till one speaker called the settlement "our beautiful and magnificent city." As the morning came on, the speeches became still more monstrous, till at last nothing was

heard but loud drunken calls for five or six people at once, showing that whatever failed in Superior, the art of oratory, at least, flourished. Finally, a "colonel" rose with a tumbler of champagne held high in air, and proposed the health of the ladies, in a broken voice: "Woman, the sharer of our sorrows, and—the—exterminator—" The concluding words, if there were any, were drowned in yells, shrieks, and tornadoes of laughter, as the intoxicated creature fell at full length upon the floor. The owner had especially requested the ladies to remain, but at this they withdrew. I heard the loud sounds of revelry and "wassail rout" until five in the morning, and just as the purple dawn was renewing the fair face of nature, the party broke up, those who were able to walk carrying ashore the poor victims of intemperance. Three "hostile meetings" (duels) were arranged at the festive board, arising from real or fancied insults offered during the evening.

QUEEN LOUISE OF PRUSSIA AND THE COUNTESS VOSS.

MUCH has been spoken and written of the grace, amiability, and talents of Louise, Queen of Prussia, daughter of Duke Charles of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, (and niece of Queen Charlotte, consort of George III of England), the beloved consort of Frederick William III of Prussia; and abundant testimony has been borne to her shining qualities by Bishop Eylert, in his "Characteristic Traits" of that monarch and his court.

Distinguished as she was by personal charms and polished manners, Queen Louise was perhaps still more so by strong good sense, a clear judgment, and, most of all, by a most winning demeanour, springing from a feeling heart. Hence, we can scarcely feel surprise at the deeply reverential and yet affectionate homage paid to this exalted lady by all who came within the sphere of her nearer intimacy. But, by a few of the older court officials, one, and one only defect was perceptible in both the king and queen, and yet one which sadly marred in those court-accustomed eyes the otherwise faultless symmetry of the royal demeanour, viz., an irrepressible aversion to, and open neglect of, the starched etiquette which had been hitherto the use and wont of the Prussian court. Not a few amusing instances of this kind are related by the worthy bishop; one or two of which well deserve wide promulgation.

On occasion of the bridal entrance of the Crown Princess (for Frederick William II was still alive) into Berlin, on the 22nd of December, 1793, the city was decked with triumphal arches, and other usual demonstrations of public homage; and at the first of these the lovely youthful bride (she was just seventeen) was greeted by a deputation of the citizens, who hailed their future queen in a most loyal address, whilst, at the same time, a numerous band of their daughters, in festal garb, and adorned with all the charms of blooming girlhood, encircled the carriage of the royal bride; while one chosen one stepped forward, and, presenting her with a myrtle wreath, spoke a simple but gracefully feeling Ode of welcome, and that with a tone and manner which showed the words had been felt, as well as learned. Highly pleased and deeply touched, the princess not only eagerly accepted the bridal wreath, but, yielding to the impetuous impulse of a loving heart, bent forward, caught the young speaker in her arms, and imprinted fast following kisses on lips, eyes, and brow. The first lady in waiting, Countess Voss, (who was immediately behind the royal bride,) shocked, nay, terrified

at such an exhibition of natural feeling, would have prevented it, had it been possible; but the deed was done, and that in the face of day, and could not be recalled. In deepest perturbation, the appointed guardian of court etiquette exclaimed, in a tone of mingled astonishment and despair, "What has your royal highness done! It is contrary to all the rules of propriety!"

"How!" returned the lovely Louise, with childlike alarm, "Must I never do so again?"

Nor was the Crown Prince himself safe from the warnings, and to him most wearying service, of Countess Voss. But Frederick William possessed a happy facility in cutting through any gordian knot of domestic difficulty, when he perceived the untying of them would require too much time and trouble; and when the prince meditated any stroke of this nature, he had furthermore the power of controlling his features so as effectually to conceal every internal emotion, though any one familiar with their usual expression might perchance detect an approach to a sarcastic smile lurking about the corners of his mouth.

Now, according to Countess Voss's code, husband and wife never dared be other than prince and princess, even to each other, consequently might not venture unannounced into one another's apartments. This state of things, however bearable in royal marriages *de convenance*, was quite misplaced in one of affection, and wholly intolerable to Frederick William and his Louise, and so he determined to rid himself of it, yet, if possible, without wounding the feelings of the excellent first lady in waiting, to whose good intentions he did full justice. One morning, accordingly, when proceeding to the boudoir of the princess, Frederick William encountered Countess Voss in the antechamber, and on her expressing her conviction of the inevitable necessity there existed for his intended visit being announced, the prince replied, "Well, Countess, I submit, and now request you to convey my desire to the princess, that I may be permitted the privilege of speaking with my illustrious consort, her Royal Highness Crown Princess of Prussia. I want to pay my devoirs, and trust to be graciously afforded opportunity thereto." Radiant with the delight of seeing etiquette restored to its due share of honourable observance, Countess Voss hastened to make the announcement in all form, well assured of the glad acceptance she would be authorized to bring back. But what words can express her surprise and disappointment when, on entering the boudoir, she beheld the gentleman whose visit she came to announce, already seated on the sofa with his arms thrown round his lovely wife, who laughed in almost girlish glee at her lady in waiting's face of consternation. "You see, my dear Countess," began the prince (who had got access to the boudoir by a short private entrance) with a good-humoured smile, "You see we are incorrigible; and my wife and I will always find means of meeting when we feel so inclined. It is right we should do so, both in the sight of men and God; and so, you must just make up your mind to wink at it. You are, notwithstanding, a most charming mistress of the ceremonies, and we'll call you henceforth 'Notre Dame d'Etiquette.'" The Countess sighed, but submitted to what she could not help.

Soon after, however, on occasion of the first public reception, after Frederick William III came to the throne, Countess Voss deemed herself entitled and bound to interfere, so as to obtain, if possible, an adherence to old established and hitherto uninfringed observances: so, after having gone into a vast minutiae of formalities, the Countess wound up with asserting the imperative necessity of the king and queen proceeding

to and from the reception in the State coach, drawn by eight horses, guided by two coachmen, and attended by three lacqueys, all in state liveries. "Very well, Countess," replied the king, with a smile, "do you order the whole arrangement, and we shall hold ourselves ready at the appointed hour."

Next day, however, when the brilliant equipage drew up before the door of the palace, the king approached Countess Voss, and, before she had an idea of his design, whisked her into the State coach, shut the door and shouted "forwards." Then, handing the queen into their usual unpretending phaeton, (which he had ordered to be close behind the State coach,) he sprang in after her, seized the reins, and himself drove his delighted and amused consort after the lady in waiting, amid the loud cheering of a vast multitude.

By such radical methods did Frederick William III rid himself of a burdensome restraint, which would otherwise have proved an irksome and ever-rankling thorn in the fragrant rose-wreath of his connubial happiness.

HOW WE LEARN.

Great truths are dearly bought. The common truth,
Such as men give and take from day to day,
Comes in the common walk of easy life,
Blown by the careless wind across our way.

Bought in the market, at the current price,
Bred of the smile, the jest, perchance the bowl,
It tells no tales of daring or of worth,
Nor pierces even the surface of a soul.

Great truths are greatly won. Not found by chance,
Nor wafted on the breath of summer-dream;
But grasped in the great struggle of the soul,
Hard buffeting with adverse wind and stream.

Not in the general mart, 'mid corn and wine;
Not in the merchandize of gold and gems;
Not in the world's gay hall of midnight mirth;
Not 'mid the blaze of regal diadems;

But in the day of conflict, fear, and grief,
When the strong hand of God, put forth in might,
Ploughs up the subsoil of the stignant heart,
And brings the imprisoned truth-seed to the light.

Wrung from the troubled spirit, in hard hours
Of weakness, solitude, perhaps of pain,
Truth springs, like harvest from the well-ploughed field,
And the soul feels it has not wept in vain.*

SOME NOTES ON STREET MUSIC.

It was remarked by some wit more than thirty years ago, and the joke has been reiterated in later days, that "the English people are very partial to music by handle." How long the reproach implied by the witticism has been applicable, we cannot say: we know that in Goldsmith's time "little Aminadab ground his music-box," and never allowed his bear to dance, "except to the gentlest of tunes;" and we are inclined to think that the appreciation of "music by handle" dates farther back, among the people at least, than the appreciation of any musical composer that could be named. Be this as it may, it is very certain that in the streets of our large towns, and especially of the metropolis, we have had all kinds of machine-made sounds, professing to be music, from time immemorial. The trade of the travelling musician, like all other trades, has had its vicissitudes, and has undergone many changes; but all its mutations have been characterized by the predominance of that species of music which is called into existence by

turning a handle, over that which is the result of the performer's taste and skill. We have had organs, harmoniums, melodions, of all sizes and powers, and many of them we have still; though those travelling monsters, high as a stage wagon, and with the girth of a haystack, which, drawn by horses, wandered through the streets at eventide, sending forth a roar comparable to Vesuvius in eruption, have all vanished. Those portentous magazines of "horrible discord" had to be put down by the police, because they frightened the Queen's lieges, were a terror to sick and nervous people, and were denounced by the faculty as injurious to their patients.

Meanwhile the character of the portable hand-organs in our streets has been deteriorating ever since the invention of the metal tongue, which is the sound-producing agent in the accordion, harmonium, etc. This metal tongue has to a large extent displaced the old pipes; the instrument has been manufactured at a much cheaper rate, and has deteriorated in still greater proportion. In the days of our boyhood we have known as much as two hundred pounds paid by a grinder for his instrument; we suspect that a tithe of that sum would now purchase the best instrument going. Instead of the old quality of tone, which, without being oppressive when near at hand, could be heard half a mile off, the modern machine splits your ears as you pass close to it, and is inaudible in the next street. Some of these abominations are in a state of perpetual convulsion, and gasp through a tune as if every note was to be the last, but always failing to realize that pleasant expectation. Others are mere machines for the explosion of outrageous noises; and it is doubtful whether their proprietors do not oftener get paid for transporting their nuisances elsewhere than for any pleasurable feelings they excite.

The good old organs, which it was a pleasure to hear, have, it may be surmised, been driven out of the field by the myriads of grinding pianos with which London and its suburbs have been deluged for these years past. These instruments are the property of speculators, who send them out by hundreds every morning, in charge of Italians, who, it seems, will turn a handle all day long for any remuneration, or for no remuneration at all beyond a breakfast and supper of vegetable soup and a bed of straw. The poor fellows are imported continually across the channel, after traversing France on foot, seduced by the lying representations made to them to the effect that they will make fortunes in England. We should like to know when this "invasion of Britain by the Romans," which is neither historic nor heroic, is to come to an end. We learn with pleasure that a society has been formed for the protection and restoration to their homes of these poor deluded wanderers: it is high time that something was done for them—and for us, the victims of the tortures they inflict.

But enough of the grinders. Let us turn now to the skilled musicians of our streets. Here we have the same complaint to make; for we deem it a fact which will scarce admit of a doubt, that at no period within these fifty years has there been so small an amount of musical skill exhibited in the streets, as there is in the present day. At first view this fact would appear as evidence against the popular taste for music; it is, however, on the contrary, an evidence in favour of it, as we shall see presently. Ten or twelve years ago you would hardly walk the quiet streets and squares of London without encountering a group of wandering musicians, performing in some retired nook the popular airs and concerted pieces of the day. All were decently skilled in their instruments; they played so well, in fact, that they

* *Hymns of Faith and Hope.* By Horatius Bonar, M.A. Nisbet and Co.

tempted you to pause and listen, and when they sent round the little tray, you willingly dropped a coin or two into it. Perhaps it was a harp and a couple of violins, supplemented with the vivid flashes of the piccola; perhaps they were violins, tenor and violoncello engaged in the enthusiastic performance of a ravishing quartette—and you must stay to hear the whole of it, and reward it with a fee; or perhaps it was an old grand piano mounted on wheels, with flute, fiddle, and oboe clustered round it, and rousing the sleeping echoes with some learned fugue or brilliant overture. Still better than any of these were the harmonious glee-singers, rubicund of face and buttoned to the chin, whom one found at eventide in the quiet west-end streets, unruffled by the din of traffic, where they made the twilight vocal with the airs of Calcott and Arne, of Bishop or of old Purcell. What has become of all these peripatetic performers and harmonized voices? we do not meet them now; instead of them we have solo ballad-singers without ear or voice, or decayed groups of discarded chorus-singers, from whose dreary strains one is glad to escape as fast as possible. The truth is, the quondam skilled musician of the streets has no occasion any longer to appeal to the street for encouragement, and you must look for him now in the licensed concert-room or the musical saloon, where he sings or performs nightly to a crowded and appreciating audience.

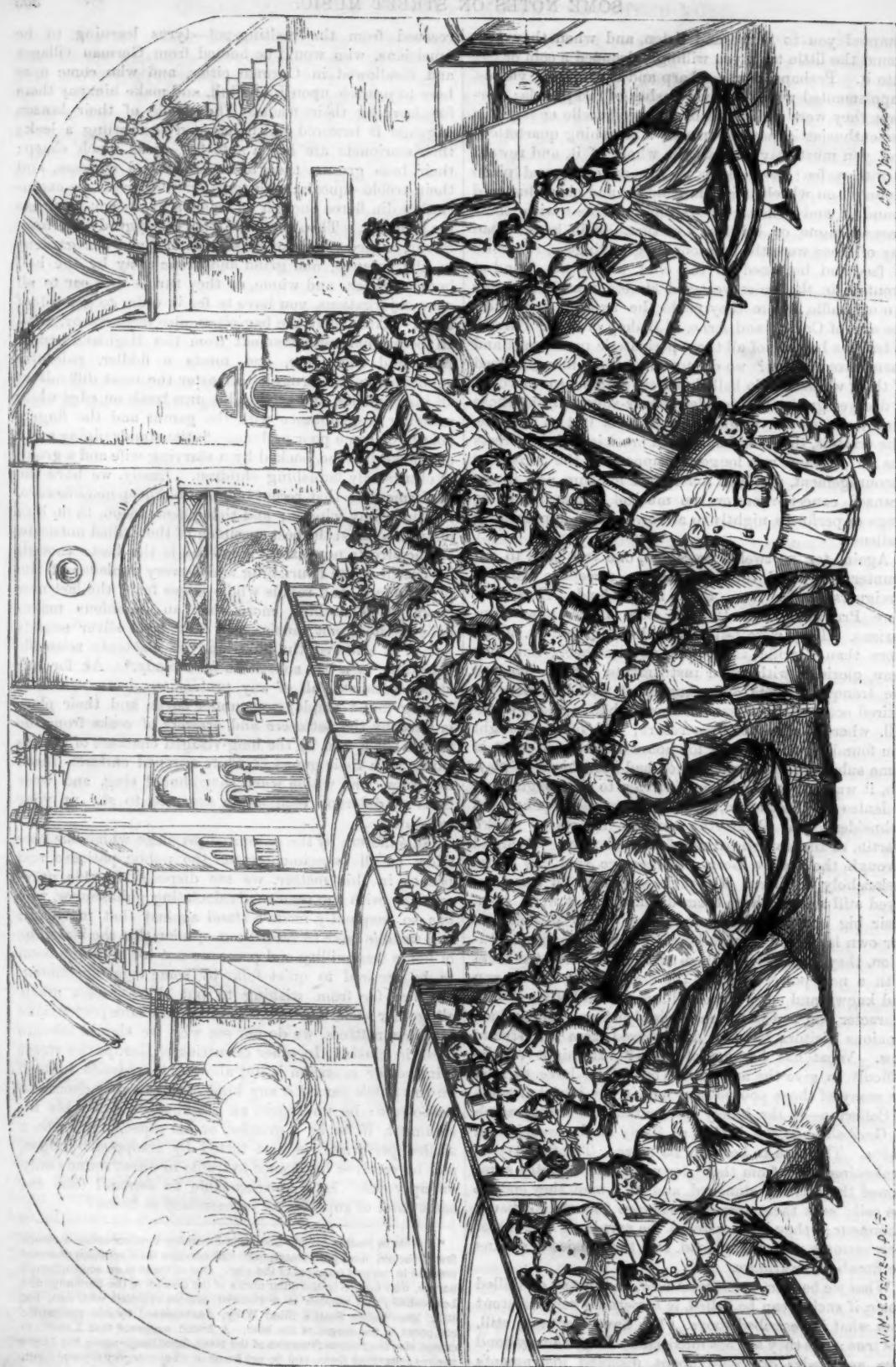
Again, ten or twelve years ago, one was sure to encounter now and then in London streets a band of foreigners—exiles from their native land. Now they were Prussians, now Italians, now Poles, now Hungarians. They were tall stately looking fellows, albeit more than a trifle seedy and down-at-heel; but they were glorious with wind instruments. They haunted the tranquil streets and squares of mid-London—the retired courts and pedestrian thoroughfares about Cornhill, where the millionaires resort; and often at night you found them stationed for hours together in front of some suburban villa, where they had been hired to play. Ah, it was but too ravishing to listen to the adagios and andantes of Beethoven, and Mozart, and Spohr, and Schneiders, and Bach—the complex figures of Padre Martin, or the learned pathos of Mendelssohn, “breathed through the mellow horn with pensive soul” by those melancholy brethren. Or perhaps you would have enjoyed still more to hear them dandling, as it were, upon their big brazen tubes the brief and dainty melodies of our own land, and to mark how, by their foreign accentuation, they breathed into them a new soul—invested them with a new power—so that the simplest air which you had known and sung from childhood revealed itself in a character you had never recognised before. These harmonious visitors have all disappeared from our streets now. What has become of them? It might not be difficult to give the answer. You might have to look for many of those poor fellows now in the burial mounds of Solferino—in the lonely graves that track the march of Garibaldi—in the ditches of Sicily or the trenches of Gaëta. They are to be seen no more. The first cry of awakening hope from their down-trodden country summoned them to her standard, and, to a man, they obeyed the call; seek them among the heroes “morts au champ d’honneur;” they have watered the new-born liberties of their country with their blood, and their majestic strains are dumb for evermore.

What we have in our streets now, in the way of skilled music, if such it can be called, is something very different from what is described above. We have Germans still, it is true; but they are not musicians—they are vagabond boys and lads, dragging about disabled instruments

rescued from the melting-pot—tyros learning to be musicians, who would be hooted from German villages and disallowed in German cities, and who come over here to practise upon John Bull, and make him pay them for learning their trade. The whole of their brazen baggage is battered and bulgy, and has sprung a leak; their clarionets are half a note flat, or as much sharp; their bass grunts, their tenor howls and wheezes, and their treble squeals; and together they make an excruciating din fierce enough to make a man covet deafness for a season. Then we have the hurdygurdyists from Savoy, a race who take possession of the front gardens in the suburbs, and grind and drone away by the half hour together, and whom, as they turn a deaf ear to all your objurgations, you have to fee in order to get rid of them. Then there are bag-pipes, also from Savoy, with an occasional reinforcement from the Highland stock. Now and then, too, one meets a fiddler, painfully agonizing in the struggle to master the most difficult of all instruments, and setting his own teeth on edge while scraping acquaintance with the gamut and the finger-board; or some poor asthmatic flutist stands piping away on the kerb-stone, backed by a starving wife and a group of obtrusively famishing children. Lastly, we have the performers on that recent triumph of cheap manufacture, the tin penny whistle; and this phenomenon, to do him justice, is about the best specimen of the skilled musician of the streets now extant; but bad is the best: though he executes the flourishing and flowery roulades of the prima donna, and retails whole pages from the last new opera, it is nothing more than an ingenious make-believe—it is not music: you cannot get silver sounds out of a soldered tin pipe, and an elaborate scientific squeaking is a bad substitute for melody.* As for our street vocalists, all of any pretensions have vanished, having found employment under cover, and their place is filled by the patters and crows of cocks from the Seven Dials, and by the long-visaged chanters of psalm-tunes with their gangs of white-aproned children hired for show, who whine when they should sing, and wear faces of dolorous resignation assumed to stir up your sympathy.

As sufferers by the unlimited privilege which our laws allow to all experimenters on the public patience and pocket in this matter, we are disposed to side unreservedly with the renowned calculating philosopher, who has so frequently made a stand against that privilege; and we take leave to record our opinion that the blessings of home tranquillity and peace are not too trifling a boon to be secured to quiet folks by some legal enactment. We are far from wishing to put down street music altogether; but, since we do not tolerate false pretensions in other matters, we do not see why we should tolerate them in music. In other countries of Europe the street minstrel or musician is not allowed to obtrude himself on the public ear with any kind of din he may choose to perpetrate: he undergoes an examination first; his instrument, if he be a grinder, or his capacity if he be a skilled performer, is first tested by competent judges, and he receives his licence to traffic in sweet sounds only on approval. Is it unreasonable to demand that the same kind of supervision be exercised at home?

* I must in justice except from this sweeping condemnation a choice few of the old blind performers, who still exercise their vocation at stated seasons in various quarters of the city. One of these is an accomplished harper, well known in the quiet nooks of the district of the Exchange and Leadenhall; and another is a violinist, almost crippled with age, but still, like Walter Scott’s Blind Willy, unsurpassed by his peripatetic competitors in the magic of his bow. A friend suggests that I ought to except also the furious fantasias of the black-faced banjo-men; but I have qualms regarding them, and do not know in what category to place them.



PURSUIT OF PLEASURE UNDER DIFFICULTIES. Getting home from the Crystal Palace on a Fête day.